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POLITICAL JOURNAL TO MAKE ITS DEBUT

The Washington Monthly Will
'Examine' Government

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11—The Washington Monthly, a new political journal boasting a prestigious array of contributors, will appear on the nation's newsstands later this month.

The magazine will be similar to a number of other investigative periodicals already emanating from Washington. But its publisher, Charles G. Peters Jr., said this one would be somewhat different in both purpose and technique from its precursors.

Mr. Peters indicated that his publication would be more frankly reform-minded than often called "muckrakers" in the trade.

"The American system is in trouble," the magazine's editorial credo proclaims. "It is not responding well enough or fast enough to our critical national problems."

"The key word is 'system,'" said Mr. Peters. "We intend to examine the workings of the entire Government, and to suggest changes where inefficiency and failure are found."

Mr. Peters said financial sponsorship had come from John D. Rockefeller 4th; Alfred Clark, described as heir to the Singer Sewing Machine fortune; Louis Marks, an oilman; Mrs. Fiona Field, Rust of the Marshall Field family; and Joseph Crowley, of New Haven Terminal.

Mr. Peters, who has invested heavily in the enterprise himself, would not reveal the amount of either individual or

total contributions. But, he said, it amounted to "a good start" on the \$600,000 budget, which he considers necessary for the success of the magazine.

Thirty thousand copies of the first issue will be distributed, including an estimated total of 8,000 to 10,000 to subscribers. The magazine is scheduled to appear on Jan. 23.

Mr. Peters is a 42-year-old native of West Virginia, who initially came to Washington in 1961 as a lawyer for the Peace Corps. His interest in politics, dates back to 1960, while a state legislator, he was active in President Kennedy's West Virginia primary campaign. He was also instrumental in influencing Mr. Rockefeller, elected last year as West Virginia's Secretary of State, to begin his political career in that state.

Mr. Peters's ideas for the magazine originated during his work in the Peace Corps, where he surveyed field activities and submitted analytical reports to R. Sargent Shriver Jr. When the concept of applying this type of reporting to a much wider area of Government and politics began to take shape, he approached Mr. Rockefeller, from whom he sought, and received, the initial backing for the project. "After that," said Mr. Peters, "I really got going."

The new magazine's brochures boast a number of well-known journalists, most of whom will serve The Washington Monthly as advisers or contributors. Richard Rovere, Washington correspondent of The New Yorker, is the chairman of the editorial advisory board, which also included Russell Baker of The New York Times, Murray Kempton of The New York Post, Hugh Sides of Life Magazine and Peter Lisagor of The Chicago Daily News.

For their services, the editorial board is being given stock in the publication. "It's a little like confederate money," Mr. Peters admitted. "It won't pay off unless the venture is successful."

Of the contributors to the magazine, Mr. Peters said, "I was lucky. I got commitments from them when they didn't really think I was going through with it," he said.

Among the listed contributors are Renata Adler, film critic of The New York Times; Richard Harris and Calvin Trillin of The New Yorker, David Broder, Richard Harwood, Walter Pincus and Richard Blumenthal of The Washington Post; Mary McGrory of The Washington Star; Bill D. Moyers, publisher of Newsday, and Frank Mankeiwicz, press aide to the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy.